

Apologising

One of the main reasons for apologising is to make it easier for the other person to forgive you.

For this to happen, apologising must be wholehearted. Forgiving properly sets both you and the other person free, so anything that can help that to happen is worth considering seriously.

Remember to say, "I am sorry THAT ..." rather than "I'm sorry IF..." Get Out Clauses ("if") stop apologies working properly. Here is another example: "I'm sorry that YOU..." Try instead "I'm sorry that I..." Partial freedom isn't really freedom at all.

Wherever possible, apologise to a person directly, either in person, or in writing - or by phone if they are further away. **Direct contact is essential for the action to have full effect.** It may sometimes be humbling; it is always liberating.

Write down the names or initials of people you need to apologise to:

Now apologise to the people one by one. Make appointments, call, write, send flowers - whatever! Learn how to apologise generously and sincerely.

Important Note: In today's society a person may be truly sorry and want to apologise but for some reason cannot admit responsibility. They may be acting on behalf of another person or body, be legally vulnerable or may have been brought up 'never to admit you're wrong.' Yet they ARE genuinely sorry! They will usually find creative ways of expressing their 'apology' - flowers, a gift, a carefully phrased letter or call.

Whether they apologise or not, of course you can forgive them anyway. You're free.

Apologising: Suggestec Script

A1: Asslgn responsiblity. What happened was my responsibility and not yours. I am responsible for what I did.

A2: When both parties are wrong: Both of us were wrong in this, and are responsible for the damage. I take full responsibility for my part, and I ask you to take full responsibility for your part. I have been wrong, and you have suffered from my mistakes.

B: Identify what Is Bad. Neither of us are bad people, but what happened was harmful. You did not deserve to suffer for what I did.

C: Cut off any escape routes. Although I had a reason for what I did, I now regret my actions.

D: DO IT! I am very sorry for the damage I have caused and apologise unreservedly for causing it. I ask you to forgive me. Will you please forgive me?

E: End well.

Yes? Say thank you! No? Go back over A-C. Give it time. An apology can be a shock. Or say: 'I hope that one day you will forgive me.'

Consider giving the person a token gift as a way of demonstrating how you are now.

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All of us get damaged by others in life. We are human beings who make mistakes and we have the potential to damage others too. Of the billions of people in this world, most have been damaged at some time or another, some very seriously indeed, others less so. Damage to relationships in everyday life is normal and unavoidable.

However, repairing relationships can be very complicated. It is often easier to walk away and "write the person off" by deciding that you will never speak to them again, or never share you life openly with them again. Blocking off people in our thinking is a bit like walling up rooms in our house instead of cleaning those rooms, or scrapping a car when it needed repairing. And walling up rooms limits OUR freedom; scrapping a car cramps OUR style.

Write down the names of anyone who you think owes you an apology for something they have done or said that has damaged you in some way:



"Get back in control with The Relationship Repair Kit. And if you're stuck, call me. We're here to help."

Andrew Sercombe,
Director, Powerchange.

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